

REMARKS

Claims 13-26 remain in the application. Claims 13, 17, 21 and 25 are rejected for anticipation by Soni et al (USP 6,285,674). Claims 14-16, 18-20, 22-24 and 26 are rejected as unpatentable over Soni et al in view of Gershon et al (USP 6,563,830). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The goal of the present invention is to use ATM multicast techniques to distribute IP multicast streams through an ATM based subscriber access node. Prior to the present invention, the multicast packets would be replicated prior to the subscriber access node. The present inventors have realized, as explained at lines 27-32 of page 1 of the specification, that an ATM based access node can carry IP multicast connections if the control part of the IP multicast connection can be carried in a point-to-point virtual path/virtual circuit (VP/VC) and the information part of the IP multicast connection carried in a point-to-multipoint VP/VC.

Claim 1 describes the providing of a single unidirectional multicast information flow between a multicast router and a subscriber access node over a point-to-multipoint connection. The examiner has equated the LEC A in Soni et al with the claimed multicast router and the ATM switch 5 with the claimed subscriber access node. LEC A is not a router of any type, much less a multicast router. A router is typically located at a gateway or other connection point of two networks and it forwards packets from one network to another, typically in accordance with a routing table. A multicast router will distinguish between multicast and unicast transmissions and will handle appropriately. LEC A is a lan emulation client. It is an end point member of a local area network. It is not a router. It is identical to each of LEC B and LEC C, which the

examiner equates with end users. It is unreasonable to read one of these devices as a multicast router and the others as end user equipment, when there is no described structural or functional difference between them.

Further, the second element in claim 13 is the bidirectional flow of control data between the subscriber access node and each subscriber via a respective point-to-point link, and this is not shown or suggested in Soni et al. As described at lines 28-38 of column 3, Fig. 2 simply illustrates that packets from LEC A are sent to the ATM switch 5 where they are replicated and then forwarded to LEC B and LEC C. It is then stated that “similar connections will be set up for packets originating from client LEC B and client LEC C, so that packets originating from any of the three clients reach the other lan emulation clients. Thus, while not illustrated, it is clear that there is another connection by which LEC B sends its packets to ATM switch 5 (or another ATM switch) for replication and forwarding to LEC A and LEC C. And a similar set of further connections for packets to be sent from LEC C. There is no separate discussion at lines 28-38 of column 3 (the only place at which Soni et al discusses Fig. 2) of information flow and control data. So the only reasonable inference is that information and control data are handled over the same connections. Note that claim 13 requires that information flow from the multicast router to the subscriber access node be via a point-to-multipoint connection. If the examiner is to equate LEC A with the multicast router and ATM switch with the subscriber access node, then the connection illustrated in Fig. 2 must be a point-to-multipoint connection from LEC A to ATM switch 5. But claim 13 requires that control data be exchanged separately over separate point-to-point connections between each of the end users LEC B and LEC C and the multicast router LEC A. This is simply not suggested anywhere in Soni et al.

There is nothing at all in Soni et al which suggests any different handling of control data, much less bidirectional flow over separate point-to-point links between each of LEC A, LEC B and LEC C.

For the above reasons, it is clear that Soni et al does not teach or suggest the subject matter of claim 13. Claim 17 distinguishes over Soni et al for essentially the same reasons, and additionally requiring that there would be a separate point-to-multipoint connection from LEC A (the “multicast router” and the a plurality of ATM switches. This is not suggested in Soni et al, due in large part to the fact that LEC A is not a multicast router in the first place.

Claims 21 and 25 distinguish over Soni et al for the same reasons as claim 13, and additionally require that there be plural point-to-multipoint connections between LEC A (the “multicast router”) and the ATM switch 5. This is nowhere suggested in Soni et al. The claims also require that the end users (LEC B and LEC C) be able to select amongst plural replicated flows, but in Soni et al each of LEC B and LEC C is shown as receiving only a single replicated flow.

The dependent claims recite further distinctive subject matter, but it suffices here to note that they are allowable due to their dependence on allowable parent claims.

The secondary art does not make up for the deficiencies in Soni et al.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Request for Reconsideration Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
USSN 09/935,568

An extension of time is requested, and the statutory fee is being paid through the
Electronic Filing System

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue
Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any
overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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